

Amendments to the Claims:

Without prejudice, this listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in the present application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting a manipulation of a programmable memory device of a digital controller for a motor vehicle, comprising the steps of
storing in the programmable memory device data and control programs for an operation of the digital controller and for a control/regulation of functions of the motor vehicle;
storing information regarding a programming/reprogramming operation in a separate memory area of the programmable memory device where only reading and programing are possible, the step of storing information regarding the programming/reprogramming operation being performed in conjunction with each programing/reprogramming operation of the programmable memory device, the stored information recording a number of times the programmable memory device has been programmed/reprogrammed; and
reading out and comparing a content of the separate memory area with another set of information in order to detect a manipulation, wherein the separate memory area is incapable of being erased, and wherein a remaining memory area of the programmable memory device is capable of being erased.
2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:
storing in the separate memory area information regarding a cumulative number of programming/reprogramming operations of the programmable memory device.
3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:
storing in the separate memory area the information regarding the programming/reprogramming operation with each erase operation of the programmable memory device.
4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein:
the information regarding the programming/reprogramming is stored in the separate memory area by setting bits.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

storing the information regarding the programming/reprogramming in a one-time-programmable region of the programmable memory device, the programmable memory device being arranged as a flash memory.

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

storing in the separate memory area information from an external programming unit for programming/reprogramming a flash memory.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

storing in the separate memory area information from an arrangement of the digital controller for storing the information regarding the programming/reprogramming operation.

8. (Previously Presented) An external programming unit for at least one of programming and reprogramming a flash memory of a digital controller for a motor vehicle, the flash memory including a programmable memory device, the external programming unit comprising:

an arrangement for storing in the flash memory data and control programs for an operation of the digital controller and for a control/regulation of functions of the motor vehicle;

an arrangement for storing information regarding a programming/reprogramming operation in a separate memory area of the programmable memory device where only reading and programming are possible, the storing of the information regarding the programming/reprogramming operation occurring in conjunction with each programming/reprogramming operation of the programmable memory device, the stored information recording a number of times the programmable memory device has been programmed/reprogrammed;

an arrangement for reading out and comparing a content of the separate memory area with another set of information in order to detect a manipulation; and

an arrangement for storing in the separate memory area information from an external programming unit for programming/reprogramming the flash memory, wherein a remaining memory area of the programmable memory device is capable of being erased.

9. (Currently Amended) A digital controller for a motor vehicle, comprising:
- a programable memory device for storing data and control programs for an operation of the digital controller and for a control/regulation of functions of the motor vehicle;
 - an arrangement for storing information regarding a programing/reprograming operation in a separate memory area of the programmable memory device where only reading and programing are possible, the storing of the information regarding the programming/reprogramming operation occurring in conjunction with each programing/reprograming operation of the programable memory device, the stored information recording a number of times the programmable memory device has been programmed/reprogrammed;
 - an arrangement for reading out and comparing a content of the separate memory area with another set of information in order to detect a manipulation; and
 - an arrangement for storing in the separate memory area information from an arrangement of the digital controller for storing the information regarding the programing/reprograming operation, wherein the separate memory area is incapable of being erased, and wherein a remaining memory area of the programmable memory device is capable of being erased.
10. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the separate memory area lacks hardware for performing an erase operation thereon.
11. (New) The digital controller according to claim 9, wherein the separate memory area lacks hardware for performing an erase operation thereon.